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Bill to Place Kyoto Protocol Standards Into State's Environmental Planning Passes Assembly

SACRAMENTO - Assemblymember Ira Ruskin (D-Redwood City) and State Controller Steve Westly announced today that their legislation to set a Greenhouse Gas emission reduction target for the state modeled on the Kyoto Protocol passed the Assembly and will be considered in the State Senate next month. The bill passed on a vote of 47 to 30.

"This is a significant step forward for the state of California to protect our environment and ensure that California does not fall behind economically in the critical job producing area of clean technology," said Assemblymember Ruskin. "Because the federal government did not take a leadership role, I am proud that the State Assembly passed my bill resoundingly."

The bill alters the State's Planning Priorities, requiring California to develop strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by at least 7% by 2010 and 10% by 2020 based on the 1990 greenhouse gas emission levels.

"California is the first state in the nation to regulate greenhouse gas – but we can't afford to be complacent," said Controller Westly. "Climate change poses many real threats to California's economic and environmental future. **AB 1365** puts us on par with the developed nations that signed the Kyoto Protocol. I look forward to working with Assemblymember Ruskin to win Senate passage of this bill."

Along with rising sea levels, more intense storms, and more frequent and intense droughts, climate change may severely affect California's multi-billion dollar agricultural industry, its economy, and the health of its citizens. Climate change is also very likely to affect the state's water supply by changing rain patterns, raising temperatures, and by reducing snow packs.

AB 1365 is supported by Sierra Club, the California League of Conservation Voters, Physicians for Social Responsibility and the Pacific Institute.

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